



# JOB AND STABLE MARRIAGE?

## EFFECTS OF WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT ON MARITAL STABILITY IN POLAND

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# Introduction

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- ▶ **Controversy around the role of women's labour force participation for marital stability**
  - ▶ Arguments based on gender norms and household division of labour → positive effect of women's employment on marital disruption (Becker et al. 1977, Parsons 1940, Cherlin 1979)
  - ▶ Women's employment increasingly a norm, role specialisation model replaced by income pooling model → women's employment stabilises marriage (Oppenheimer 1997, Cherlin 2000, Stevenson and Wolfers 2007)
- ▶ **Context moderates the relationship (Cooke 2006, Cooke and Gash 2010, Kaplan and Stier 2010)**
- ▶ **Aim of our study:** to contribute to the discussion on the role of the context for the association between women's employment and marital stability through investigating the case of Poland before and after the onset of economic transition



# Theoretical background

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- + Role-specialisation model (Becker et al. 1977)
- + Gender norms-based model (Parsons 1940)
- + Independence mechanism (Hobson 1990, Ruggles 1997)
  
- Economic interdependence model (Oppenheimer 1997)
- Similarity of activities and interests (Simpson and England 1981, Coltrane 2000, Sayer and Bianchi 2000)
  
- ▶ The relevance of particular models and mechanism depends on the the context



# Context dimensions important for the relationship btw women's employment and marital stability

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## ▶ Gender-roles

- ▶ Define to which extent a deviation from the gendered division of work in the household is feasible and socially accepted (Sayer and Bianchi 2000, Cooke 2006, Cooke and Gash 2010, Evertsson and Neramo 2007)

## ▶ Economic situation of the households

- ▶ Determines the level to which material aspirations of the couple are satisfied (Cherlin 2000, Stevenson and Wolfers 2007)

## ▶ Institutional context

- ▶ Defines the extent to which the state supports women's economic independence from their partners (publicly funded childcare, financial support in case of union disruption) (Orloff 1993, Iversen et al. 2005, Kaplan and Stier 2010)



# Previous studies

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## Cross-country comparisons of the role of cultural and institutional dimensions:

- ▶ Women's economic resources destabilise marriages in countries promoting women's dependence on the partner or on the market; in more gender-neutral settings women's resources strengthens marriage - Kaplan and Stier (2010)
- ▶ Cooke (2006), and Cooke and Gash (2010) – the negative effect of women's employment on marital stability is stronger in Germany, weaker in the UK and US.

Our study: on a single country that experienced political, economic and social transformation that resulted in a reassignment of the functions between the state, the employers and the family, and in reorganisation of the society

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# Context of Poland before and after 1989

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Pre-transition settings	Post-transition settings
<b>Social policy model</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Basic universal social security</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individual responsibility</li></ul>
<b>Family policy</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Subsidised child-related goods and services</li><li>• Universal family benefits</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased costs of raising children</li><li>• Reduction in the direct financial support for families with children, including support for single parent families</li></ul>
<b>Labour market</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Obligation / right to work</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk job loss &amp; unemployment</li></ul>



# Hypotheses

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- ▶ After 1989 double income became an important tool of risk diversification and protection against material deprivation
- ▶ Material aspirations of the society increased

## → **Hypothesis 1 (income effect)**

Following the system transformation the association between women's employment and risk of marital disruption should have changed **in the negative direction** compared to pre-1989 period.

- ▶ After 1989 full and guaranteed employment ceased → employment as a precondition for a woman to leave the unsatisfactory marriage
- ▶ Family policy became less supportive for families → the decision to become a single mother became more difficult from the material perspective

## → **Hypothesis 2 (dependence on the labour market)**

Under the market economy the correlation between women's employment and marital instability should have changed **in the positive direction** compared to pre-1989 period

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# Data

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## ▶ Source:

- ▶ Polish Generation and Gender Survey (GGG-PL) 2011
- ▶ contains retrospective fertility, partnership and employment histories

## ▶ Analytical sample

- ▶ 4842 ever married women born 1955-1993 (546 disruptions)
- ▶ 3300 ever married men born 1955-1993 (299 disruptions)

## ▶ Marital disruption

- ▶ Duration from legal marriage till union disruption (either declaration of the respondent on the date when the union ended or divorce – whatever comes first)



# Method

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- ▶ Hazard regression of marital disruption for first marriages
- ▶ **Proportional piecewise constant exponential model**

$$h(t) = h_0(t) \exp(\beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2(t))$$

- $h(t)$  - hazard of marital disruption at time point  $t$
- $h_0(t)$  - baseline hazard split after 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> year
- $x_1$  - time-constant characteristics of marriage
- $x_2(t)$  - time-varying characteristics of marriage

- ▶ Separate models for men and women
- ▶ **Main independent variable:** employment status (working, not working, employed but on leave) interacted with calendar period (up to 1989, 1990s, 2000s)



# Control covariates

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## ▶ Time-constant covariates:

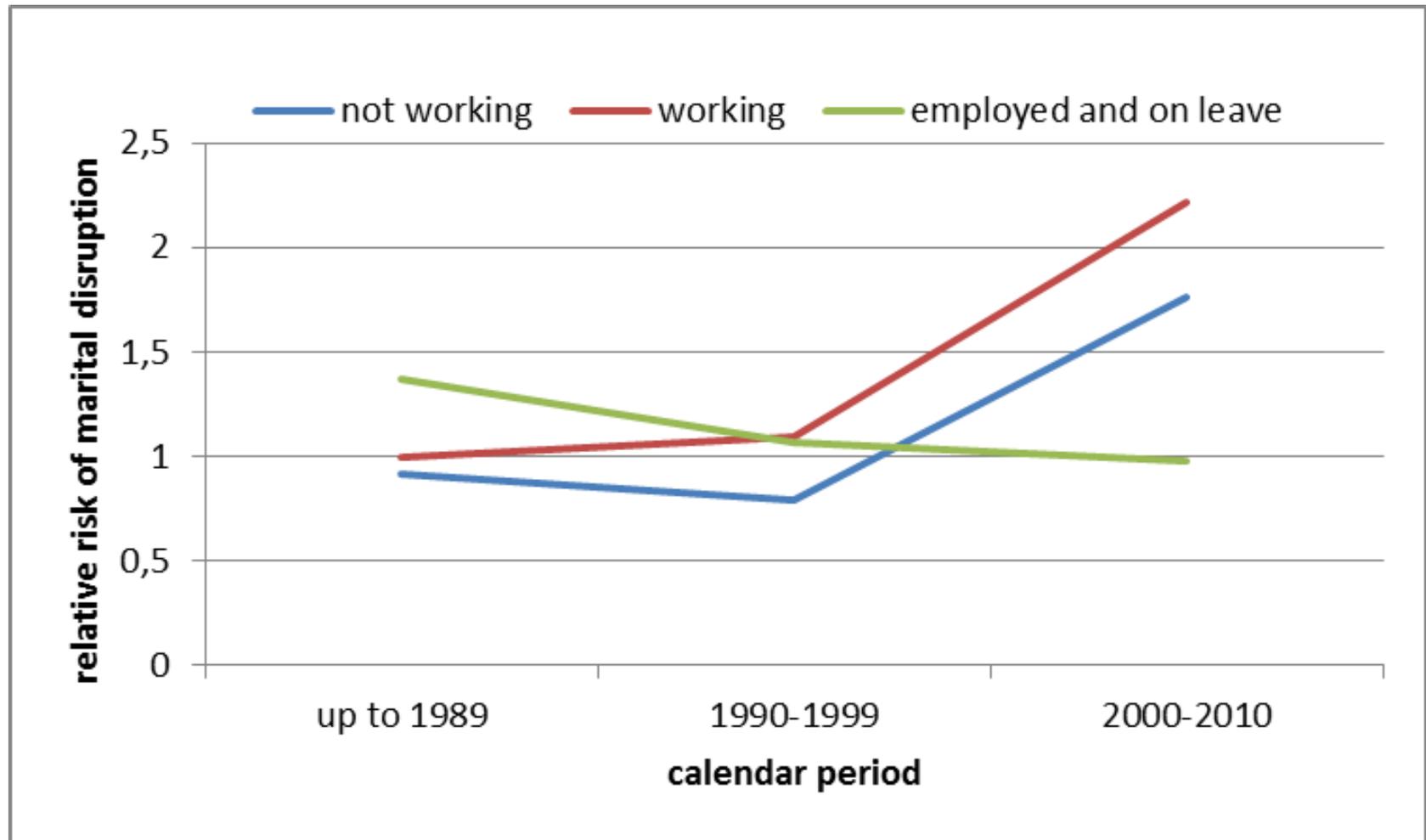
- ▶ Place of residence during childhood: urban big, urban small, rural
- ▶ Parental divorce
- ▶ Age at marriage
- ▶ Premarital conception or birth
- ▶ Premarital cohabitation

## ▶ Time-varying covariates:

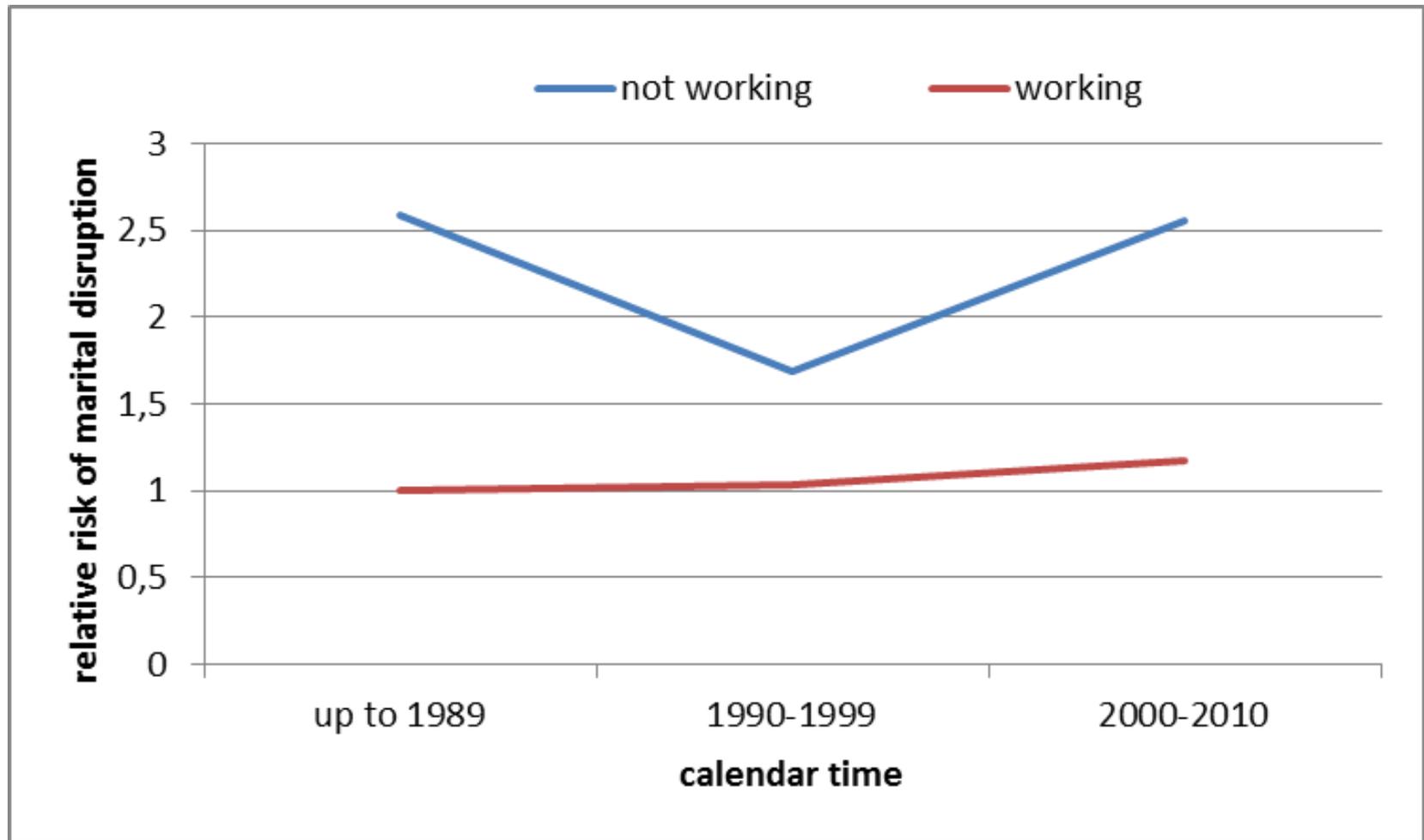
- ▶ Education: tertiary, secondary, vocational, basic, in education and younger than 28 years, in education and aged 28+
- ▶ Parity
- ▶ Age of the youngest child



# Changing relationship between **women's** employment and marital stability



# Stable relationship between **men's** employment and marital stability



# Conclusions and outlook

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## ▶ Summary

- ▶ **Positive correlation** between women's employment and risk of marital disruption arisen after 1989-transformation – in favour of **Hypothesis 2**
- ▶ Possible factors in force are: instability on the labour market  
less supportive family policy  
increased individual responsibility for own maintenance
- ▶ **Negative correlation** between men's employment and risk of marital dissolution before and after 1989

## ▶ Future plans

- ▶ Controlling for selection into employment dependent on the proneness to divorce
- ▶ Eliminating endogeneity through instrumental variables



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Thank you for your attention!

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